

Graduate Academic and Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes November 29, 2010

Voting Members Present: Ken Abramowicz (Chair), Donie Bret-Harte, Lara Dehn (phone), Orion Lawlor, Jen Schmidt, Xiong Zhang (phone).

Ex-Officio Members Present: Laura Bender, Anita Hughes, Lillian Anderson-Misel, Libby Eddy.
Also present: Jayne Harvie (note-taking)

1. Discussion/modification/approval of agenda.

The agenda was approved as distributed.

2. Discussion/approval of 11-15-2010 meeting minutes.

The revised minutes were approved.

3. Discussion topics.

- A. Graduate grading policy. Page 201 of the UAF Catalog delineates the grades and GPA average required to graduate. Should GAAC clarify this paragraph in an attempt to mitigate the concerns related to the use of the “+/-” grading scale for graduate students. Should GAAC pass a motion modifying the “+/-” grading scale for graduate courses?

Laura B. confirmed that the statements in this section of the Catalog were correct, though they are confusing. Lara D. pointed out that funding grants require a 3.0 overall GPA, adding to the confusion. Advancement to Candidacy requires a GPA of 3.0, but Orion pointed out the requirements for the BS/MS are unclear. Students can have many varying 400-level course grades.

Ken asked if there were interest in eliminating the use of +/- grades at the graduate level, or in getting rid of “C-” and “B-”, or perhaps using a modified system. Donie thought it would be worthwhile to clarify the existing policy.

Ken and Orion will work together to come up with a motion for the next meeting.

- B. Special topics courses and seminar courses. Are these courses meeting the needs of departments that desire flexibility in course content in specialized circumstances? Is GAAC’s review process for these courses adequate?

Laura B. confirmed the fact that GAAC does not review graduate level Special Topics (-693) and Seminar (-692) courses. These allow the departments flexibility with changing subject matter, and usually are graded Pass/Fail and are repeatable for credit.

Ken noted holes in the process and how courses can be created while circumventing review by the senate curriculum committees. How do we address the potential for academic integrity to suffer as a result? Suggestions included having a similar curricular affairs committee for the graduate level concerns (similar to CAC and CR for the undergraduate level); and perhaps working down the chain by

contacting curriculum review councils at the colleges and schools and reminding them of academic standards.

4. GAAC proposals ready for acceptance were approved by the committee, including:

- 1-GCCh. – BIOL F618/F418 (cross-listed with Geography)
- 3-GPCh. – Certificate of Completion for the Post-Baccalaureate K-12 Special Education Licensure Program.
- 4-GPCh. – Program Change to the Master's in Education.
- 33-GPCh. – M.S. M.A.T – Change Name to Biological Sciences

5. Review of GAAC proposals from prior meetings.

- 19-GNC: ATM F666 - Atmospheric Remote Sensing (Donie)
Status: Waiting on changes to be received from the submitter. Donie will email them again.
- 24-GNC: FISH F631 - Data Analysis in Community Ecology (Ken and Lara)
Status: Approved by the committee.
- 26-GCCh: WLF F625 – Analysis of Vertebrate Population Survival and Movement (Jen)
Status: Approved by the committee with revisions that have been received.
- 36-GNC: EE F614 - Numerical Methods for Electrical Engineers (Lara)
Status: Hold for next meeting.
- 37-GNC: EE F643 - Selected Topics in Computer Engineering (Lara)
Status: Approved with changes by the committee, including a new title.

6. Discussion of new GAAC proposals (as time permits).

- 25-GNC: ATM F678 – Mesoscale Dynamics (Xiong)
Status: Discussed by the committee, and the syllabus still needs work in areas of devising a clearer grading statement, and providing a more detailed class schedule.
- 18-GCCh. – Atmospheric Radiation (Xiong)
Status: Discussed by the committee, and the syllabus is inadequate for a stacked course, and needs a plagiarism statement. Lara noted it needs a clear attendance statement; Xiong noted the schedule needs to include deadlines. Jen suggested the cheatsheet have a size constraint included.

The following Special Ed courses were postponed for discussion until Sue Renes returns.

- 05-GCCh: EDSE F605 - Early Childhood Special Education (Sue)
- 06-GCCh: EDSE F610 - Assessment of Students with Disabilities (Sue)
- 07-GCCh: EDSE F612 - Curriculum and Strategies I: Low Incidence (Sue)

- 08-GCCh: EDSE F622 - Curriculum and Strategies II: High Incidence (Sue)
- 09-GCCh: EDSE F624 - Social/Emotional Development, Assessment, and Intervention (Sue)
- 10-GCCh: EDSE F625 - Teaching Mathematics to Special Learners (Sue)
- 11-GCCh: EDSE F633 - Autism: Communication and Social Disorders (Sue)
- 12-GCCh: EDSE F640 - Collaboration and Consultative Methods (Sue)
- 13-GCCh: EDSE F642 - Autism and Asberger Syndrome: Social and Behavioral Issues (Sue)
- 14-GCCh: EDSE F677 - Reading Assessment, Curriculum and Strategies (Sue)

Ken asked everyone on the committee to review the new MA program request and the associated new courses in Political Science. These need the full input of the committee. Ken noted the courses are stacked. There also appears to be an internship option, and who it's targeting should be considered. Concerns were expressed that the required paper is only 15-pages long, which doesn't seem to a true project or internship at a Master's level. After everyone on the committee has reviewed these, Ken would like to invite the program faculty to a meeting (possibly in January) to discuss the concerns and have questions answered.

- 28-GNC – Political Science Research Design and Methods (Ken)
- 29-GNC – Arctic Politics and Governance (Ken)
- 30-GNC – Internship in Public Affairs (Ken)
- 27-GNP – M.A. Political Science (Ken)

The PSY courses and M.Ed. program will be discussed when Amber (and Sue) are back.

- 31-GCCh. – PSY F652 – Practicum Placement - Clinical I, change repeatability (Amber)
- 32-GCCh. – PSY F653 – Practicum Placement – Clinical II, change repeatability (Amber)
- 35-GPCh. – M.Ed. –Remove Reading and K-12 Reading Endorsement Specialization (Amber)

Approved:

- 34-GPCh. – Biological Sciences: Remove Biology/Botany/Zoology concentrations (Jen)
Status: Approved after review by the committee. Jen had spoken with Christa Mulder.

7. Other items:

Ken asked for volunteers to take items that Regine had signed up for last time. She won't be able to attend the committee meetings in December.